



Pittsburgh Vending Guide



THE CITY OF
PITTSBURGH



2026

How to use this Guide

This guide contains information regarding vending, or the sale of goods, services, wares, or merchandise from a non-permanent structure such as a cart, truck, trailer, kiosk, or tent, in the City of Pittsburgh. It is intended to supplement, not replace, the Vending Rules & Regulations, Business Licensing Rules & Regulations, City of Pittsburgh Zoning Code, Business Licensing Code, other municipal policies, County health code, and all other relevant regulations.

This offers a quick, non-official overview of key program information as a starting point for business owners and entrepreneurs interested in vending in Pittsburgh.

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LEGAL DISCLAIMER: This handout should not be used as a substitute for applicable law, including the City of Pittsburgh Zoning Code, Business Licensing Code, other municipal policies, and County health code. The applicant is responsible for compliance with all applicable legal requirements, whether or not addressed in this handout.

Types of Permits and Licenses

Vending General

Vending License - Grants permission to operate as a vendor in the City of Pittsburgh. Required for vending on public and private property with some exemptions described below. Issued by the Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections (PLI). *Annual renewal required.*

Location-Specific

Group Vending Site Permit – Grants permission for multiple vendors to operate in close proximity on a designated portion of the street and/or sidewalk on a site approved in accordance with §175, Public Art & Civic Design Commission. Issued by PLI with review by DOMI. *Annual renewal required.*

Record of Zoning Approval – Grants permission to operate on private property in accordance with relevant use standards. Required in some cases for vending, as outlined below. Issued by the Department of City Planning (DCP). *No renewal required.*

Vending Location Priority Permit (Right-of-Way) – Grants permission to operate at a specific location in the street or sidewalk on a continuous basis. Required in some cases, such as vending from the sidewalk in the Central Business District. This permit is issued by the Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections (PLI) and includes a review by Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI) the Department of City Planning (DCP). *Annual renewal required.*

Vending Location Priority Permit (Parks) – Grants permission to operate within the boundaries of and on the Right-of-Way surrounding a city park, on a continuous basis, within outlined restrictions. Required for vending in and on the immediate periphery (same side of the street) as a city park. Issued by the Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections (PLI). *Annual renewal required.*

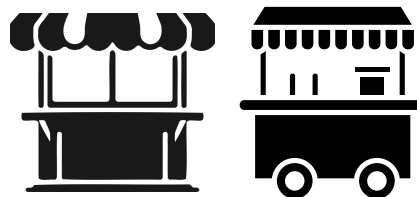
Types of Vendors

Vending Vehicles and Large Trailers



Trucks and trailers wider than 4ft. must use legal **parallel parking spots** with service windows facing the sidewalk. They can also park on private property with the owner's permission.

Non-Vehicle Vending Units and Small Trailers



Pushcarts, small trailers (less than 4ft. wide), kiosks, stands, tents, and tables must use sidewalks or private property.



Peddlers

travel by foot and do not have a vending unit

All vendors must have an approved Vending License unless:

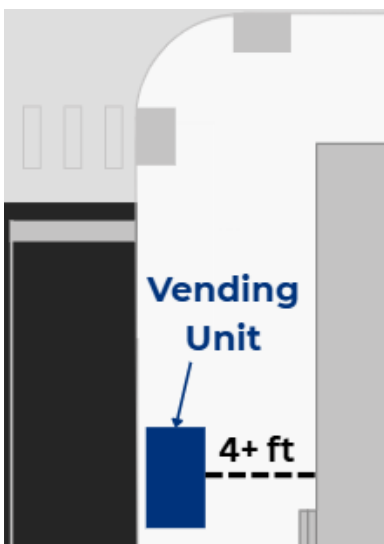
- **Vending in the Strip District:** Between 15th St., 24th St., Liberty Ave. and Waterfront Place and Railroad St., vendors **do not** need to obtain a vending license, but other laws still apply. *A clear passage on the sidewalk of at least four (4) feet must be maintained.*
 - Vendors must seek written permission from the adjacent building and/or property owner to use a specific area. The building and/or property owner may charge a fee for vending on their property. When applicable, Zoning approval may still be required.
- **Participating in a special event, farmers market, or event organized with a permit,** unless the timing and/or footprint extend beyond the permitted events.
- **Vending from a tent or table on private property**

Rules for All Vendors



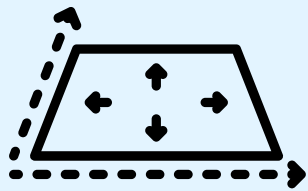
Vending Site Safety and Accessibility

- **A clear, at least 4ft. wide path must be kept on the sidewalk.** Customers waiting in line must also keep this path clear.
 - For sidewalks over 10ft., a path of *at least half* of the sidewalk must be kept clear
- Vendors may not **obstruct** a building entrance, bike lane, electric vehicle charger, fire hydrant, bus stop, accessible parking spaces, loading zone, outdoor dining, or any other structure.
- When on public property, goods must be **contained** on, in, or under the vending unit or vehicle. Additional tables, crates, cartons, racks and similar items are not permitted.
- Vendors must ensure **no tripping hazards**, such as cables and cords in pedestrian or customer paths are present.
- **No service window may open facing vehicle traffic.** Vendors on both public and private property must ensure that customers do not queue, order, wait, or sit in the street or any vehicle path.



- Vendors **may not place signs** in the public right-of-way.
- Vendors may not stage **materials** on the sidewalk, beyond what is necessary for queue control and ensuring clear space.
- Any generators must be permanently mounted on the unit or vehicle.

Rules for All Vendors



Unit Size

- Units must fit into chosen locations and comply with all traffic and accessibility standards described the Rules & Regulations.
- **Small trailers (less than 4ft. wide) should go on the sidewalk, while large trailers (more than 4ft. wide) should be in the parking lane (if using the Right-of-Way).**
 - DOMI may grant exceptions to the 4ft. width maximum for trailers on the sidewalk.
- Vendor Vehicles that exceed 22ft. in length may be required to obtain additional parking permits for additional space used.
- **No unit designed for employees to serve customers from the exterior of the unit shall be placed in the parking lane.**



Garbage

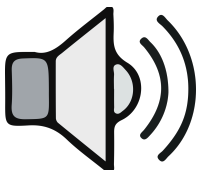
- Vendors **cannot dispose of garbage in City receptacles.**
- Vendors must have a **30+ gallon** garbage can secured to their unit (if their product generates trash) and keep the **25-foot radius clean.**

Rules for All Vendors



Operating Hours

- On private property, vendors may operate at any hours as long as no other regulations or conditions of other approvals prohibit doing so.
- **In the street and sidewalk, vendors, including peddlers, may not operate between 12:00am and 6:00am in nonresidential areas or between 8:00pm and 8:00am in residential areas,** unless otherwise permitted by the License Officer or through another special event or permission.
- In parks, vendors must comply with the operating hours of the park or hours specified on the permit.



Sound

- Vendors **may not use amplified sound while in the street or sidewalk, or in public parks.**
- As a general rule of thumb, sound produced **should not be audible 75 feet away,** unless otherwise permitted.
- More details on sound requirements are outlined in the Rules and Regulations and City code.

Rules for All Vendors



Fire Safety

- Vendors must follow all fire safety standards from all applicable levels of governance. **Pittsburgh Fire Bureau permits are required** for units with heating elements starting January 1, 2027. Email fireinfo@pittsburghpa.gov for more information.
- No vendor using a heating element may operate within **10 feet** of another structure or vendor under any circumstances.



Additional Reminders

- The vending unit or vehicle **must be available to move at any time**. If you are leaving your vending unit in your permitted spot while leaving town, be sure to leave keys with a trusted business partner, friend, or family member.
- Vendors must **prominently display copies** of all approved permits and licenses.
- Vending units and vehicles must comply with all applicable **Allegheny County Health Department** regulations, including food safety, fumes, and emissions, and stay in compliance with City of Pittsburgh **taxes**.

Street & Sidewalk Vending Locations

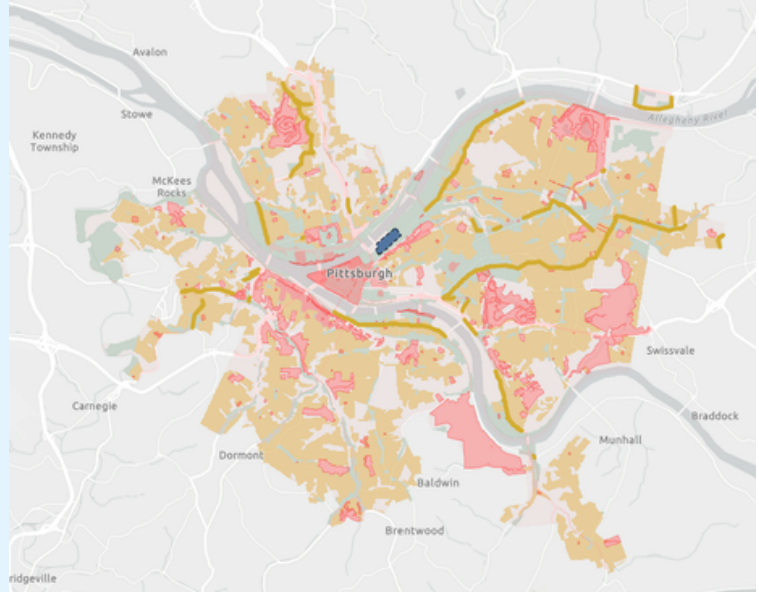
Zoning Requirements

Vending must occur in an authorized Zoning district or adjacent to authorized uses.

Nonresidential Districts allow vending by right.

Residential Districts allow vending only outside or on the same lot as gardens, farms, community centers, parks, religious institutions, and schools.

Public Realm and Planned Development Districts each have their own guidelines. Email zoning@pittsburghpa.gov for help.



Explore our [online vending map](#) to see where each of these Zoning districts are located.

Special Note

Vending of any kind is prohibited in parking lanes and on sidewalks in the Mt. Washington neighborhood in the area bound by Grandview Ave, Wyoming St, Virginia Ave, and Shaler St.

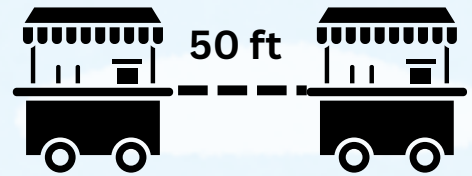
In the **Central Business District, City Parks, or for Group Sites**, vendors must use pre-selected locations or apply with a new location through the Public Art and Civic Design Commission.

Vendors may not locate directly adjacent to, on the property of, or within a 100-foot radius of any entrance to a Major Public Destination Facility, including Acrisure Stadium, PNC Park, PPG Paints Arena, David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Peterson Events Center, and UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse.

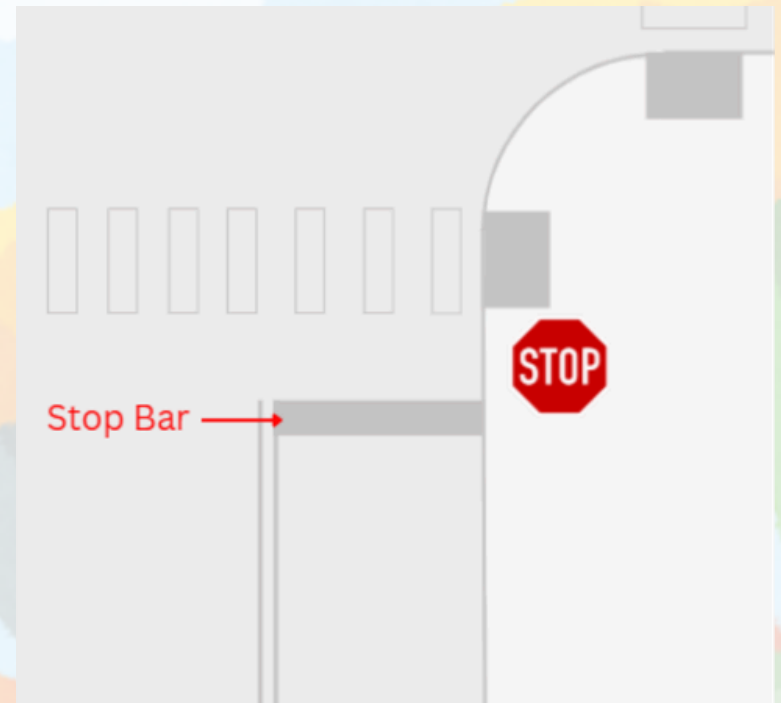
Vendors with a Peddler designation may move freely in residential areas but need to start moving at least 250 feet every 15 minutes.

Street & Sidewalk Vending Locations

Traffic Safety, Accessibility, and Curb Management



- Vendors must operate at least **50 feet** from any other vendor, unless in a Group Vending Location, the Central Business District, Parks, and private property. Units with heating elements must still be **10 feet** from all other vendors or structures at all times.
- Vending operations must be at **least 20 feet** from an intersection or crosswalk as measured from the stop bar.
 - *Materials under 42" high may be permitted in this zone on the sidewalk at the approval of DOMI.*
- Vending is only allowed located on streets and their adjacent sidewalks with a speed limit of **25mph** or less.
- Vendors may not locate on or within 1 foot of catch basins or storm drains. Vendors may not obstruct any utility vents, vaults, or grates



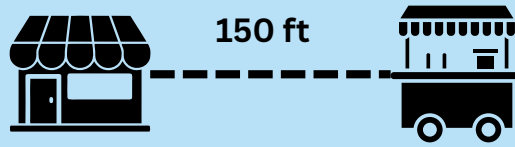
The Stop Bar is the solid white line painted at intersections and traffic signals indicating where vehicles must stop.



Reminder: only locations where your unit can fit and meet all vending site safety, accessibility, and others rules are eligible!

Street & Sidewalk Vending Locations

Nearby Storefronts or Stationary Vendors



Vendors cannot locate within 150 feet of the primary entrance of a brick-and-mortar business or stationary vendor (Location Permit holder) if the new vendor's product is the same or similar to the vendor's primary product*, **unless** the vendor obtains permission from the competitive business **or** one or more of the following conditions is met:

- *A stationary vendor already holds a permit in a given location before the opening of a competitive brick-and-mortar business selling the same or a similar product.*
- *The vending is associated with a brewery, bar or other establishment authorized to serve alcoholic beverages in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. These can host vendors who may sell competitive products immediately adjacent to their establishments.*
- *Vending operations occur outside the operating hours of the competitive business or businesses.*
- *The vending operations occur entirely on private property.*

**If you are unsure whether this applies to your business, please email vending@pittsburghpa.gov.*

- Mobile vendors may not locate in the licensed area of an Outdoor Dining or Outdoor Retail license. **Stationary vendors may be relocated to accommodate a new license for Outdoor Dining and Retail.**
- Food vendors may not locate within 10 feet of intake vents, obstruct utility vents or vaults, or otherwise interfere with nearby storefronts or infrastructure



Street & Sidewalk Vending Locations

Parking Lane - Additional Rules

- Any street parking spot used must be a **legal, parallel parking spot**. Vending from angled or perpendicular street parking is prohibited. **Parking spaces adjacent to a parking protected bike lane may not be used for vending.**
- Reservations are not generally required but may be coordinated through the [Pittsburgh Parking Authority](#). Reservations are required for vending from the parking lane in the Central Business District.
- Vendors with units longer than twenty-two (22) feet must work with the Pittsburgh Parking Authority to ensure appropriate payment for all parking spots used.
- Vendors must obey all rush-hour parking restrictions, even if holding a Vending Location Priority Permit.
- State-owned roads are not eligible for vending in the parking lane without prior approval from PennDOT.

Parking Lane Example



Street & Sidewalk Vending Locations

Sidewalk - Additional Rules

- Mobile vendors may use sidewalks adjacent to **state-owned roads** if they meet all other criteria.
- **Sidewalk vendors must use the portion of the sidewalk along the curb**, keeping the required clear path between the adjacent building and the vending unit, unless otherwise approved by DOMI.

Sidewalk Example



DOMI-approved use sidewalk along the building

Vending Location Priority Permits (Location Permits)

- **Vending License holders interested in using the same location frequently can apply for a Location Permit** from the Department of Permits, Licenses, & Inspections, which includes:
 - permission to leave vending materials overnight
 - first priority for site use, and
 - protection from competitive mobile businesses setting up within a 150-foot radius.
- In addition to following all regulations applicable to license holders, Location Permit holders must:
 - Clean and power wash the sidewalk on a periodic basis, if requested.
 - If leaving a vending unit unattended, respond promptly to requests to remove materials from the Right-of-Way to allow snow plowing and/or other maintenance activities, if needed.
- **A Location Permit is required to use approved parks vending locations or to use sidewalk vending locations in the Central Business District.**
- One vendor or organization may hold up to five Location permits at a time. Additional permits may be granted with permission from the License Officer.
- Locations approved prior to the adoption of the 2025 ordinance will remain available to their current license holders, unless the City needs to relocate a vendor for safety or other curbside operation or the vendor does not renew their license.

Group Vending Sites

Anyone interested in managing a group of vendors (2 or more within 50 feet) in the street or sidewalk may apply through the Group Vending Sites process. Review the our [website](#) and the [Rules & Regulations](#) for more information.



Private Property

When is Zoning Approval Required?

The city zoning code controls use of land throughout Pittsburgh, including on private property. Vendors or hosts may need to obtain zoning approval for vending on private property as an “outdoor retail sales and services” use. To vend to the public (not as part of an event) on private property or adopt-a-lot sites, **zoning approval is required if any of the following is true:**

- The site is located in a residential district or where residential compatibility standards apply
- There will be permanent structures or vehicles left on the site off-hours
- It is the only use on a zoning lot.

Contact zoning@pittsburghpa.gov for quick assistance on determining if zoning approval will be needed for your proposed vending use.

Use Standards

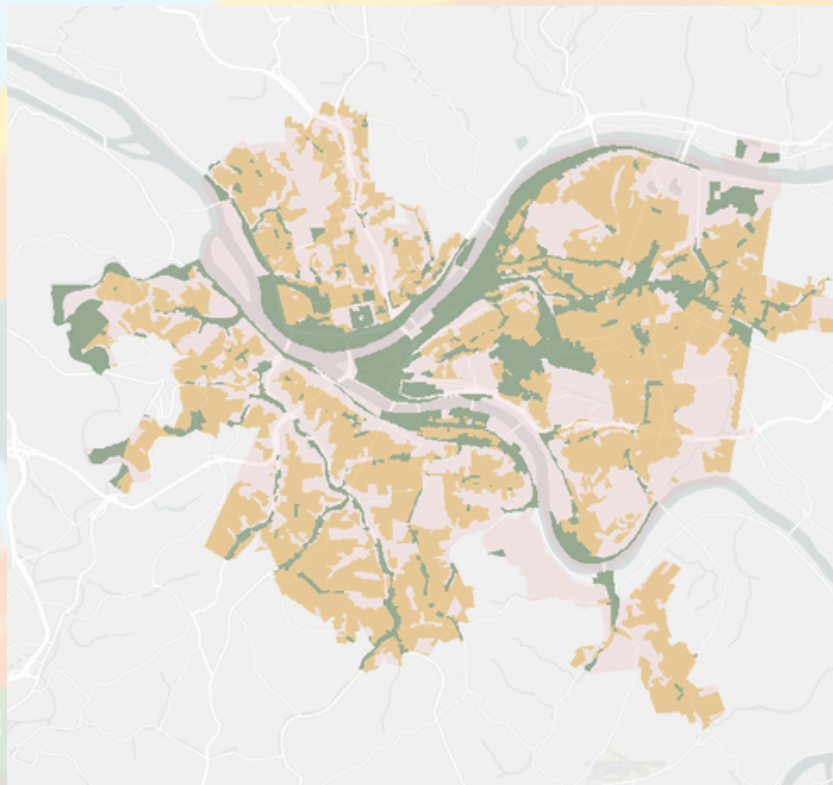
All vending on private property, whether requiring a Zoning Permit or not, must:

- **Obtain a license**, unless vending only from tents and tables,
- **Provide enough space** for customers purchasing or attempting to purchase goods and service without encroaching on the public right-of-way or adjacent property
- Provide sufficient trash receptacles for wrappers, containers and other disposable products

Customers may not be served when queueing or waiting in any street or vehicle path. No service window may be open facing vehicle traffic.

On private property, the 150-foot competition restriction does not apply.

Operating hours are not restricted on private property by the Vending Rules & Regulations, but other restrictions map apply. Reach out to zoning@pittsburghpa.gov with any questions.



Explore our [online vending map](#) to see how the Zoning in your proposed location matches our rules.



THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Contact info and links

Any general questions about the vending program can be sent to vending@pittsburghpa.gov

Specific permitting questions can be answered through the OneStopPGH Customer Service team.

In-person and remote customer service hours are Monday - Friday from 9 am to 3 pm at 412 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

Remote customer service is available via:

- Live Text Chat in the OneStopPGH portal
- Phone at 412-255-2175
- Email at pliapptech@pittsburghpa.gov

Visit [PLI's OneStopPGH Overview](#) for more information on OneStopPGH.

Find more information and a list of resources on our [Vending Website](#) and in the [Vending Rules & Regulations](#).

To report non-emergency issues or concerns about a vendor, please [contact 311](#).

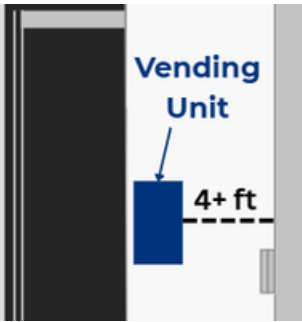
Accommodations

Anyone may request a reasonable accommodation to modify how the City of Pittsburgh provides Program services due to a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended. To request a reasonable accommodation, contact the ADA Coordinator at ada@pittsburghpa.gov or 412-301-7041.

Pittsburgh Vending Regulations

Key Numbers and Reminders

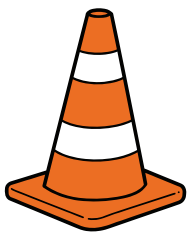
Traffic Safety



A clear path **4 feet wide must always be kept on the sidewalk**. Customers should queue along the sidewalk so as to keep this area clear.

For sidewalks over 10 feet, at least half of the sidewalk must be kept clear.

Vending within **20 feet** of an intersection or crosswalk as measured from the stop bar is prohibited, unless special approval is received.



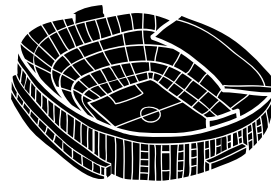
No vending from angled or perpendicular street parking. **Customers cannot be served on the street or in any vehicle path.**

Vending on the street and sidewalk where the speed limit is over 25 mph is prohibited.



Make sure there are no cables or tripping hazards in pedestrian pathways.

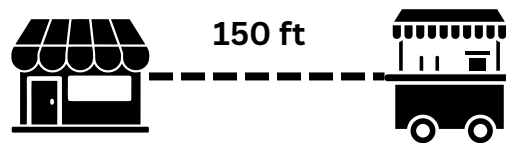
Spacing



Vending is not allowed within **100 feet** of any entrance or on the property of a **Major Public Destination Facility**.

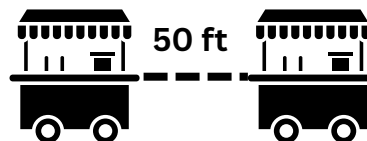
Currently, the list of restricted facilities includes:

- Acrisure Stadium
- PNC Park
- PPG Paints Arena
- David L. Lawrence Convention Center
- Peterson Events Center
- UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse



150 ft from stationary vendors or non-vending businesses that sell the same primary product required, unless:

- vendor has partnered with a bar or brewery
- other business is not open
- other business grants the vendor permission
- vendor is on private property



50 ft between vendors required on the street and sidewalk, unless in a Group Vending Zone (vendors with heating elements must still be 10 feet from any other vendor or structure)